



MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND INSURANCE

TENNESSEE FIRE SERVICE AND CODES ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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TENNESSEE'S TUFF-EST TO GET THE AXE

FIREFIGHTERS COMPETE IN STATEWIDE COMPETITION

Bell Buckle, TN. – Firefighters from across Tennessee are training for the 2nd Annual Tennessee Ultimate Fire Fighter “TUFF” Challenge to be held at the Tennessee Fire Service and Codes Enforcement Academy on Saturday, September 24.

This event is sponsored by the Tennessee Fire Chief's Association (TFCA) and the Tennessee Fireman's Association (TFA). The competition celebrates fire fighters and is a great way to kick off Fire Prevention Month in October.

“As the state's Fire Marshal, I am proud that the Academy will be hosting this great event again for our Tennessee fire fighter-athletes,” said Paula Flowers, State Fire Marshal and Tennessee's Commissioner of Commerce and Insurance. “We are proud of our fire fighters and the job they do.”

In 2004, the event consisted of a relay style competition consisting of 3-5 team members, with 19 teams competing. This years' challenge will include an individual competition as well.

Registrations for 2005 have more than doubled, with approximately 170 competitors (listed below) are expected from all regions of the state. They will compete in a rigorous timed course of tasks including victim rescue, ventilation, hose-hoisting and climbing. These tasks simulate the challenges fire fighters face in any emergency situation.

Proceeds from the TUFF Challenge benefit the Tennessee Fire Fighter Memorial, which is now in the planning stages through TFACA, TFCA, and TFA. Tennessee is one of the few remaining states that does not have a dedicated site in honor of its fallen heroes. The memorial will be dedicated to the men and women that have made the ultimate sacrifice in service to their communities and neighbors. The dedication ceremony for the memorial is scheduled for later this year.

Various national and local companies are also co-sponsoring the event, the help defray costs and to show their support of Tennessee's fire service.

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Awards are given to the top winning competitors. A "traveling axe" is awarded to the top place finishers; winning competitors display the "trophy" in their local fire station. The first place finishers from 2004 must again compete and come in first to be able to hold on to the axe, while others try to take it from them.

"Last years' event was a huge success, with approximately 500 attendees cheering on the competitors," stated Roger Hawks, Academy Executive Director. "These firefighters should all be proud of themselves, not only for their willingness to compete, but for the major part they play in seeing the memorial come to fruition."

The Tennessee Fire Service and Codes Enforcement Academy, located on 330 acres 15 miles south of Murfreesboro, is the state training facility for both codes enforcement and emergency service personnel. The 18 building campus is the premier educational facility, which includes dedicated structures for training in firefighting and building codes and offers a full spectrum of courses to emergency service first responders and to codes enforcement personnel.

Any media wishing to cover this event should contact Karen Alexander at 931.294.4111 or toll free at 800.747.8868.

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2005 TUFF CHALLENGE COMPETITORS AND CO-SPONSORS

INDIVIDUALS

Brandon Cunningham, Clarksville
Sam Anderson, Franklin
Timothy Dines, Clarksville
John Lopiccolo, Brentwood
Darrin Bell, Smyrna
Brett Herron, Mt. Gilead
David Frost, Shackle Island
Jay Spry, Tullahoma
Jason Driver, Sparta
Daryl Alexander, Murfreesboro
Shane Norris, Pleasant View
Jerrod Hawkins, Brentwood
Jason Stewart, Cookeville
Jason Sparks, Sparta
Cody Steele, Shackle Island
Dan King, Harriman City
Ed Byrd, Newport
David Osbourne, Hendersonville
Alex Fowler, Rural Metro
Anthony Hance, Cocke Co.
Drew Noland, Smyrna
Matt Doak, Shelbyville
Marc Cartright, Shelbyville
Danny Shelton, Cocke Co.
Tim Pack, Newport
David Wilbur, Franklin
Brian Fann, Hendersonville
Matthew Kinney, Rural Metro
Shawn Roberson, Cookeville
William Stewart, McMinnville
Eric Lingerfelt, AEDC
Melvin Holmes, Murfreesboro
Steven Ellis, Ashland City

TEAMS

Jackson Five (Jackson FD)
Rural Metro FD
Unionville Volunteers (VFD)
Ft. Campbell FD Clarksville
Pleasant View VFD
Hillsboro VFD
Lower End (Warriors Path VFD)
The Ash Kickers (Gordonsville FD)
Columbia FD
City of Whitehouse FD
Ashland City VFD
Brentwood FD
Putnam County FD
Shackle Island VFD
Murfreesboro FD
Bartlett Pride (Bartlett Vol Fire Assoc.)
5-Alarm (Knox Metro Firefighters Assoc.)
Rutherford VFD
Franklin FD
Portland FD
Doak Squad (Shelbyville FD)
Smyrna FD
Bartlett FD
Harriman City FD
Cookeville FD
Hendersonville FD
Local I-14 Firefighters Association
Newport FD
AEDC Fire Dawgs

CO-SPONSORS

G. & C. Supply, Walmart Distribution Center (Shelbyville), Volunteer Fire Insurance Services, Duck River Electric, State Farm Insurance (Murfreesboro), Pro-Fire Equipment, Harless Fire Equipment, Ferrara Fire Apparatus, Inc., and "Trophy Rock" Rocky Mountain Minerals, Jostens, and Dove Designs.